

*Supply—Justice*

There are in the world various places for the marketing of sugar. But Canada is caught in the toils of the sugar trust which is connected with the London exchange.

Mr. Chairman, there is in those continuous increases a case which really goes against Canadian anti-trust legislation. When it has been established that sugar is not scarce at the present time, it is realized that despite that fact some companies, by a common scheme, succeed in increasing the price of a certain product, like sugar, as in this case.

In the month of May, when such a thing happened, the Minister of Justice announced that he would investigate the problem. Immediately the companies, by common agreement, decreased the price of sugar.

The result of the investigation announced in May by the Minister of Justice was never made known to us. There was no announcement or press release, reporting that the Department of Justice, following its investigation, had discovered such or such a thing. The companies took advantage of the situation recently to increase once again the price of sugar, so that it reached an all-time record, the highest since 1943.

What is going on at the present time and why is the Minister of Justice tolerating so long that companies speculate that way, at the expense of the Canadian people and to the prejudice of Canadian trade?

I do not understand how the Department of Justice has put up for such a long time with the monopolizing of a group of companies who try to keep the prices at a high level at the expense of the Canadians, while there are federal acts to deal with such companies which, by means of a trust, thus manipulate prices.

I wonder why the Minister of Justice does not act more quickly in the case under consideration.

We hear about investigations, but those investigations have been going on for many months, in fact since May, and we have yet to hear some of the results. Are things dragging on or are the minister's hands tied in any way by the companies that impose their will on the government? That has happened before. Are we witnessing today the repetition of one of those acts? How is it that the minister does not proceed more expeditiously in his investigation? He does not give an answer to the house, he does not say what is going on while the sugar companies are playing their little game.

That is all the more serious because at the present time those sugar companies are practically all foreign companies that come here to exploit the Canadian people in that field.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Justice should investigate that matter or at

least he should submit the report of his investigation as soon as possible and see to it that those problems be dealt with, to the benefit of the Canadian citizens.

I have now, Mr. Chairman, another matter that I should like to explain, for a few minutes, to the members of the house. I am referring to the parole board.

Several weeks if not several months ago, the Minister of Justice announced—in fact he promised that there would be an investigation in regard to the parole granted some individuals—incidentally, there have been two or three—who, on account of their behaviour, have proven that parole was not justified in their case.

In my riding, several families—and at least one officially—have been the victims of the parole system. The Minister of Justice certainly knows of whom I am speaking: it is the man Dionne, from Quebec. We have not yet seen the report on the inquiry the Minister of Justice was to make in this matter.

I now want to point out to the government another problem which, I think, is a most important matter at this time. It is the question of loans and interest rates.

The federal statutes contain no legislation to control loans and rates of interest. In our counties, we see a proliferation of finance companies or individuals who lend money at excessive interest rates, so that it could almost be called legalized theft.

I, myself, have found many cases where farmers in my county had been granted loans at rates of 40 and even 45 per cent. Lately, in Ontario, the provincial government appointed a committee to inquire on the activities of some finance companies. That inquiry has shown that some individuals or loan sharks were lending money at such abusive interest rates that it was nothing less than a theft.

At this time, there is no federal law in our statute books to control the interest rates charged by moneylenders.

Mr. Chairman, I humbly submit to this government that if there is a case of urgency, it is surely to provide some legislation in this field, in order to establish some rules regarding loans, whether they be mortgage loans, small loans by finance companies, or loans in excess of \$1,500. That legislation would set down rather strict rules to put a stop to the unfair practices now going on in Canada in that field.

A while ago, I heard the hon. member for Greenwood deal with another problem, the revision of our constitution. The Minister of Justice announced last week end that a federal-provincial conference would be held